

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



February 1, 1983

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 83-06

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS  
ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADOPTION AGENCY DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS  
ALL REGIONAL CENTER DIRECTORS  
ALL LOCAL AGENCY FCIS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: FOSTER CARE INFORMATION SYSTEM (FCIS) UPDATE

REFERENCE:

As a result of the implementation of the Foster Care Information System (FCIS), several items have been raised which are addressed in this letter. They include addition of a new reporting requirement, issues requiring clarification, and procedural changes to facilitate agency reporting and error resolution. A formal update to the FCIS Reporting Instructions Manual is currently being prepared. However, until its completion, this letter is to be distributed to agency staff with FCIS responsibilities and used as a supplement to the manual. In addition, report utilization is being reviewed and your agency's comments are requested.

I. REVIEW FCIS REPORT UTILIZATION

For the past few months, county welfare departments have been receiving a statewide alphabetic microfiche report on a monthly replacement basis with mid-month updates. All agencies have also been receiving various hardcopy reports which have been produced for control and management information purposes. (See Attachment 1.) It is anticipated that additional management information reports will soon be available for agency use.

Your agency's response is requested as to the utilization of the reports that have been distributed, including any suggestions you may have for improvement so that the FCIS reports can better satisfy your agency's needs. Please submit your comments by February 18, 1983, to:

Department of Social Services  
Statistical Services Branch  
744 P Street, M.S. 12-84  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Identify the report name and number and describe its usage or what changes should be made, such as format, production frequency, and any other recommendations you may have.

## II. NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENT

In July, 1982, aid code 43 was designated as the aid code to be used to identify children whose eligibility for Emergency Assistance-Foster Care (EA-FC) had been established. Only county welfare departments are affected by this requirement and are to begin reporting EA-FC (aid code 43) cases immediately if they have not already done so. Complete the SOC 158A for an EA-FC case as you would for any Foster Care payment and services case (refer to Attachment 2a and 2b for specific item completion).

When the child's eligibility for EA-FC terminates and the child remains in out-of-home care (OHC) placement, the SOC 158 must be submitted with the new case number entered in B3. Complete AFDC-FC Termination Date (L2) if the child's continued OHC placement is not to be funded by AFDC-FC (aid codes 40 or 42).

## III. ISSUES REQUIRING CLARIFICATION

### 1. Role of Contact Person and Liaison Person -

Several agencies are still unclear as to the distinction between the functions of the liaison and the contact person for the FCIS. To clarify their roles, the following is a more complete description of responsibilities as originally intended by the Department.

Each agency liaison person is expected to have knowledge of both the Foster Care Program and the Foster Care Information System (FCIS). Additionally, this person should have the authority to respond to general FCIS questions from agency staff, as well as disseminate FCIS information to agency staff. Thus, this person becomes the link between the Department and the agency when FCIS data reporting issues arise.

The contact person(s) for each agency is expected to resolve specific case problems. They should also be able to resolve individual agency Batch Control Mailing Point problems.

If your agency would like to change the liaison person or the contact person, contact your FCIS analyst in Statistical Services Branch at (916) 322-5462 or (ATSS) 492-5462.

### 2. Suspended Transactions -

A transaction is placed in the suspense file when a change (04) transaction is submitted which either:

- a. did not match a case record already on file (this is listed as an "Unmatched Case Number" on the Critical Errors Summary Report FCI 030-1), or

- b. contains an item to be updated while the same item is currently in error (this is listed as a "History Update While Current Data in Error" on the Non-Critical Errors Summary Report FCI 025-1).

The suspended transactions are held in abeyance in the Suspense File until the unmatched case number or history update error(s) has been corrected at which time the update can then be applied to the current FCIS case record.

Suspended "Unmatched Case Numbers" appear on the Critical Errors Summary Report (FCI 030-1). As with all critical errors, these transactions are handled by Statistical Services Branch staff in conjunction with agency input via telephone.

Suspended transactions which result in "History Update While Current Data in Error" appear on the Non-Critical Errors Summary Report (FCI 025-1). These errors should be corrected immediately by agency staff using the same procedures for correcting non-critical errors (see Attachment 3, Item 9). Enter a "C" in the correction box, if one precedes the item in error, as well as the corrected data.

All suspended transactions appear on the New Suspended Transactions Report (FCI 055-1) which is produced for Statistical Services Branch. Upon correction of these errors, "turnaround documents" are generated as follows:

- a. One turnaround document (SOC 158) is produced from the correction transaction and contains corrected items and data which was current at the time of initial submission of the update. (This document is for agency verification only; the yellow copy should be retained in the case file after disposing of the white original.)
- b. Another turnaround document (SOC 158) is produced from the Suspense File and reflects the most recent information contained on the current FCIS case record; i.e., the updated information that was held in suspense while the initial error was awaiting correction. This document is labeled "SUSPENDED TRANSACTION" which is to be retained in the case file and used for your next submission on this case.

### 3. Illegible Entries on FCIS Forms -

In order to aid the keyentry operators, persons responsible for FCIS forms completion are encouraged to print legibly. This should help to reduce the number of errors caused by keyentry operators' inability to decipher some data entries. Frequently, an "X" has been confused with an asterisk (\*) by keyentry operators. To avoid this problem, use a checkmark (✓) rather than an "X" when completing items that require such an entry, i.e., Legal Authority for Placement (H2-10). When making a correction and a correction box precedes the item in error, enter a "C" not an "X" in the correction box.

4. Use of Red Ink -

Red ink is preferable to black ink when completing FCIS forms. The red ink, however, must be a type which can be eradicated with correction fluid (e.g., Wite-Out) without smearing.

5. Begin Sequential Batch Numbering -

Begin numbering at 0001 on the Batch Transmittal Form (SOC 158C) effective January 1 each year.

IV. PROCEDURE MODIFICATION

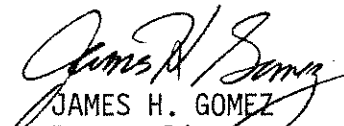
Changes have been made to the FCIS reporting procedures to accomodate agency requests or problems encountered in system operation. Until a formal update can be made to the FCIS Reporting Instructions Manual, three attachments are provided to facilitate case reporting and error resolution:

Attachment 2a and 2b - FCIS Case Activity Matrices which replace the original version utilized in previous training sessions. These matrices delineate mandatory completion items based on type of document submitted and case activity reported.

Attachment 3 - Changes to or clarification of FCIS reporting requirements.

Attachment 4 - New and revised edit messages and criteria.

As previously stated, please use the material in this letter to supplement the manual instructions until a formal update to the FCIS Reporting Instructions Manual is available. Until such time, Statistical Services Branch will continue to disseminate FCIS update information through the All-County Notice process. If you have additional issues that need clarification or wish to recommend changes to the forms or manual which are currently in the process of revision, please contact the Statistical Services Branch at (916) 322-5462 or (ATSS) 492-5462.

  
JAMES H. GOMEZ  
Deputy Director  
Administration

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cc: CWDA

FCIS REPORT INVENTORY

January 25, 1983

Report Number	Report Title	Frequency	Distribution
FCI025-1	Non-Critical Errors Summary Report	Daily	1B, 1L
FCI025-2	History Correction Verification	Daily, if any	1B
FCI025-3	Seal Case Transaction Verification Report	Daily, if any	1B
FCI025-4	Tape Transaction Non-Critical Errors Notification Report	Daily, if any	1L
FCI025-5	Delete Case Verification	Daily, if any	1B
FCI030-1	Critical Errors Summary Report	Daily	1B, 1L
FCI030-3	Report of Transactions Processed	Daily	1B, 1L
FCI035	Suspected Duplicate Cases for the Same Child	Daily	1B, 1L
FCI040	Notification to correct a History Item	Daily	1B
FCI050	Uncorrected Errors Report	Monthly	1L
FCI085	Active Phase I Cases Not Updated on Phase II	One time-End of Implemen.	1L
FCI090	Foster Child's Data Record Summary	1 Mo. prior to Assessment and at case closure	1B
FCI090	Foster Child's Data Record Summary-County Specific Microfiche	Monthly	1L (CWD only)
FCI415-7	Six-Month Reassessment Due	Monthly	1B
FCI050-1	Age of Children in Placement (County)	Monthly	1B
FCI060-1	AFDC-FC Payment Status (County)	Monthly	1B
FCI070-1	Address Location (County)	Monthly	1B
FCI063-1	Alphabetic Microfiche	Monthly and Mid-month update	1B (CWD only)
FCI410-6	Children in Need of Joint Assessment	Monthly	1B
FCI420-5	Active Cases During the Quarter by Agency Responsible for Placement and Supervision	Quarterly	1L

B = Batch Control Mailing Point  
L = FCIS Liaison



Required if Foster Care case is open six (6) months or more and no previous entry has been made in the Case Review Determination line (M1-5).  
Required if Foster Care case is open six (6) months or more.

CHANGE TO OR CLARIFICATION  
OF FCIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

CHANGE TO FCIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Six-Month Certification (M1-5) - This field was originally intended as a "one-time necessity" to satisfy the inventory requirement of P.L. 96-272. However, until an initial six-month reassessment has been completed on all FCIS cases, agencies are required to complete M1-5 at the initial six-month reassessment for each case opening or reopening. Agencies will be notified to discontinue completion of this item when the inventory requirement has been met.

CLARIFICATION OF FCIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Closing Phase I Cases - The Department of Social Services has completed a system modification to accept closure of Phase I cases not previously closed prior to the implementation of Phase II (April 1, 1982). The cases to be submitted under this process are those cases which were open in Phase I and closed between November 1, 1981, and March 31, 1982, but were never submitted to DSS for closure on FCIS or were submitted subsequent to the implementation of Phase II and were rejected because of the date of closure.

Cases which have never been submitted to DSS for closure are to be completed as follows using the preprinted SOC 158 (Phase I turnaround) or an SOC 158A:

- Enter Date of Submittal (A1)
- Circle code 05 (Phase I Address Change Only) in Transaction (A2)
- Enter termination date and "98" for reason in Services Case Termination (L5)

NOTE: If an SOC 158A is used, be sure to enter the correct case number in Case Number (B1).

Phase I cases submitted subsequent to April 1, 1982, have an updated FCIS record but the case remains open (because of invalid closure date for Phase II). If the preprinted SOC 158 in the case file has errors on it, correct those errors first and upon receipt of an error free SOC 158, submit the information above for closing the Phase I case.

Should Phase I closure information be submitted incorrectly, these specific error messages will be generated:

- L5 Phase I Closure Term. Date Not Valid
- L5 Phase I Closure Date Not Between 11/01/81 and 03/31/82
- L5 Phase I Closure Reason Not Valid

In addition, if a closure transaction is applied to a case that has been updated in Phase II, a notation will be on the turnaround document stating: "Phase I Closure, Case Was Updated (NOTE: Not All Case Information Shown)."



2. Closing Non-Welfare Agency FCIS Cases - When a non-welfare agency is terminating the AFDC-FC payment for an out-of-home care placement, the entire case is to be closed on the FCIS. A foster care "services only" case supervised by a non-welfare agency is never to be left open on the FCIS. Please refer to the matrices (Attachment 2a and 2b) for the specific items to be completed when closing a services and payment case. As indicated, there must be an entry in Ending Date of Placement (F3), AFDC-FC Termination Date (L2) and Services Case Termination (L5) in order for the case to be closed on the FCIS.
3. Opening FCIS Cases - Agency staff are encouraged to verify whether a child has been previously reported to the FCIS by using the statewide alphabetic microfiche before opening a new case. Many duplicate cases occur when a case is opened using a case number which differs from that of the most recently closed case. If the child is listed on the microfiche as a closed case, the case should be reopened using transaction code 03. If the SOC 158 from the previous case is not available, a duplicate SOC 158 may be requested from your Statistical Services Branch FCIS analyst. If the reopened case number differs from that of the most recently closed case, enter the new case number in B3. This will link the cases together and eliminate duplicate cases.
4. Reopening FCIS Cases - In order to reopen a child's foster care case which had been open and then closed on the FCIS, most items must have an entry regardless if the item remains unchanged on the SOC 158 (see Attachment 2a and 2b for specific item completion). If an entry is omitted, an error condition will result for that item. It is not necessary to place an asterisk (\*) in the Ending Date of Placement (F3), AFDC-FC Termination Date (L2) or Services Case Termination (L5) as the dates will automatically be moved to the child's history file when the case is reopened.
5. Runaways - When a child runs away from the facility, "RUNAWAY" is entered in Child's Street Address (E1). No other entries are required until the AFDC-FC payment is terminated at which time both the services and payment cases are to be closed on the FCIS.
6. Ending Date of Placement (F3) - Ending Date of Placement (F3) is to be completed only when a) a placement change is made, or b) the entire FCIS case is closed.
  - a. Placement Change - When a child changes placement, EXCEPT in RUNAWAY situations, an entry must be made in Ending Date of Placement (F3) to reflect the date the previous placement ended. In addition, those mandatory items listed in the matrices under "Placement Change" must be completed. (Attachment 2a and 2b.)
  - b. FCIS Case Closure - When both the foster care services and AFDC-FC payment cases are closed, an entry must be made in Ending Date of Placement (F3). In addition, those mandatory items listed in the matrices under "Close Case-Services and Payment" must be completed. (Attachment 2a and 2b.)

7. Emergency Foster Care (H1) - This item must always be completed whenever a child changes placement. An error condition will result otherwise.
8. Reassessment Due Date (K1) - Reassessment Due Date (K1) is computer generated; therefore, this item need not be entered by the agency unless the next reassessment is scheduled to be done in less than six months. The FCIS generates a date six (6) months from the date entered in Initial Placement Date (F4) or, if there is an entry in Date Current Reassessment Completed (J1), a date six (6) months from J1.
9. Corrections to Current Data in Error - These are two types of errors that may occur, computer identified or worker identified errors. As a result, slightly different procedures must be followed for error resolution.
  - a. Computer Identified Errors - All entries on the SOC 158A (Blank Foster Child's Data Record (FCDR) and the SOC 158 (Computer Generated FCDR Turnaround Document) are edited to insure validity and consistency with the system specifications. When an entry is made which does not meet these edit criteria (DSS Manual Section 26-552.40), a system edit has occurred. Asterisks (\*) will appear in the white portion of the item and an error or reminder message will be printed on the bottom of the turnaround document. A message printed at the bottom of the SOC 158 with an (R) following it is a reminder message only. It is not an error message and will not appear on a subsequent turnaround document.

To correct computer identified errors:

- (1) If a correction box precedes the item, enter a "C" in the correction box and enter the correct data in the shaded area of the item in error. Circle the appropriate alpha-line indicator at the left of the document.

NOTE: Child's AKA (D1, D2, D3) - The correction box in D1 applies to D1, D2 and D3. When correcting D1, D2 or D3, enter a "C" in the D1 correction box and enter the entire AKA regardless of which item is in error.

Child's Address (E1-4) - The correction box in E1 applies to E1-E4. A "C" must be entered in the correction box in E1 when correcting any item in E1-E4.

Legal Authority for Placement (H2-11) - The correction box preceding H2 applies to any item in H2-11. When correcting any item in H2-11, enter a "C" in the correction box and enter the entire line.

If a "C" is not entered in the appropriate correction box when correcting an item in error, data is rejected and the error message "History Update While Current Data in Error" is printed on the turnaround document (SOC 158). In order to clear this error message, submit the turnaround document (SOC 158) entering the "C" in the correction box, as well as the correct data, and circle the alpha-line indicator.

- (2) If a correction box does not precede the item, enter the correct data in the shaded area of the item in error and circle the alpha-line indicator.

Exception: Services Provided (K2-11) - Enter the correct data in Services Provided Since Last Reassessment (J2-11) which will then appear in K2-11 on the turnaround document as indicated in FCIS Reporting Instructions Manual (Section 26-552.22, Line K, Item 2-11).

- b. Worker Identified Errors - If the caseworker identifies an error in the data preprinted in the white area of the turnaround document (SOC 158), it is to be corrected as follows:

- (1) If a correction box precedes the item, follow the instructions in 9.a.(1).
- (2) If a correction box does not precede the item, enter the correct data in the shaded area of the item in error except for the following items. These items must be corrected by using an asterisk (\*) in the first space of the item to initially delete the item. (See FCIS Reporting Instructions Manual, Ref. Pg. 6-4 for example.) The correct data is then submitted on the turnaround document that verifies that the deletion has been processed.
  - (a) Child's Name (C1, C2, C3) - An asterisk (\*) must be placed in the first space of each field of name in error.
  - (b) Reason for Removal from Home (D4) - If an entry was erroneously made in both "code" and "other (specify)" sections of this item, an asterisk must be placed in both of these fields.
  - (c) Emergency Foster Care (H1) - Place an asterisk (\*) in both the "yes" and "no" boxes of this item.
  - (d) Services Provided (K2-11) - Place an asterisk (\*) in box below each entry and on the subsequent transaction, enter the entire line.
  - (e) AFDC-FC Termination Date (L2) - Place an asterisk (\*) in first space of item.
  - (f) Services Case Termination (L5) - Place asterisks (\*) in first space of "Date", "Reason", and/or "Other" depending on which field is incorrect.

If an error is identified by the worker in Case Number (B1), a correction is made through an entry in New Case Number Unique I.D. (B3).

10. Suspected Keyentry Errors - Errors have resulted from data being incorrectly entered by keyentry operators. If such an error occurs, it is still necessary for the agency to submit the correction using the guidelines in 9(a) and (b). However, the agency should alert the Statistical Services Branch-FCIS Analyst of these errors to aid us in reducing their frequency.
11. Corrections to Closed Cases - It is often difficult to correct a closed case with numerous error messages printed at the bottom of the turnaround document (SOC 158). Every error listed at the bottom of the turnaround document (SOC 158) must be corrected on the same document. Remember to enter a "C" in the correction boxes provided and circle the alpha-line indicator at the left of the document. Omission of either the "C" or the correct data for each item in error will cause the entire transaction to be rejected.

As it is more difficult to clear errors on a closed case, it is suggested that all errors be corrected on the turnaround document prior to closing the case.

Our FCIS Analysts in the Statistical Services Branch are available to assist you in document completion and error resolution by telephone. Please do not hesitate to call them when you are in need of assistance at (916) 322-5462 or (ATSS) 492-5462.

NEW & REVISED EDIT MESSAGES & CRITERIANEW

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Message</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
J1	Date Current Reassessment Completed.	Reassessment Date is Missing.	Must have an entry if INITIAL PLACEMENT DATE is more than six months prior to DATE OF SUBMITTAL.
K1	Due Date	Reass. due computed from J1 field. (R)	If entry in DATE CURRENT REASSESSMENT COMPLETED (J1), computer generates entry which is six months after J1.
		Reass. due computed from F4 field. (R)	If there is no entry in DATE CURRENT REASSESSMENT COMPLETED (J1), computer generates entry which is six months after INITIAL PLACEMENT DATE (F4).

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Revised Message</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
H1	Emergency Foster Care for this Child.	Emergency FC=Y, aid code not 40, 42, or 43	If Yes and Date of Current Placement is the same as Initial Placement Date, then Aid Code should be 40, 42 (AFDC-FC), or 43 (EA-FC).
L1	AFDC-FC Beginning Date	AID NOT 40/42/43, BEGIN DATE PRESENT. (Aid code not 40, 42, or 43 and beginning date reported. Data not accepted, zeros will be printed back on turnaround documents.)	If Aid Code is other than 40, 42, or 43, date must not be entered.
L2	AFDC-FC Termination Date	AID NOT 40/42/43, TERM DATE PRESENT. (Aid code not 40, 42, or 43 and termination date reported. Data not accepted, zeros will be printed back on turnaround documents.)	Must be blank if Aid Code is not 40, 42, or 43.

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Revised Message</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
L3	AFDC-FC Ongoing Payment	INVALID AFDC-FC, AID NOT 40/42/43. (AFDC-FC Ongoing payment is reported and aid code is not 40, 42, or 43. Data not accepted, zeros will be printed back on turnaround documents.)	Must not have an entry if Aid Code is not 40, 42, or 43.
L4	County Approved Facility Rate	INVALID COUNTY RATE, AID NOT 40/42/43. (County approved facility rate is reported and aid code is not 40, 42 or 43. Data not accepted, zeros will be printed back on turnaround documents.)	Must not have an entry if Aid Code not 40, 42, or 43.
L5	Services Case Termination	Phase I Closure Term. Date Not Valid.	Standard date check.
		Phase I Closure Date Not Between 11/01/81 and 03/31/82.	Transaction to close Phase I Case (05). Date of services termination must be between 11/01/81 and 03/31/82.
		Phase I Closure Reason Not Valid.	Valid Code is 98.
		<u>Special Conditions</u>	
		<u>Message</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
		Case sealed.	Transaction processed to seal entire case, both current and history.
		Data sealed.	Transaction processed to seal select data.
		Transferred from another agency.	Interagency transfer processed. Submit update within three working days.
		Transferred from another county.	Intercounty transfer processed. Submit update within three working days.
		Phase I Closure, Case was Updated (NOTE: Not all Information Shown.)	Phase I case updated in Phase II. Phase II closure transaction applied.